

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 05402 180753Z

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TAGS: BEXP, ETRD, PFOR, GE, US, UR

SUBJECT: THE U.S. AT THE SPRING 1975 LEIPZIG FAIR

REF: BERLIN 5371

1. SEEN FROM OUR VANTAGE POINT, THE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICE (BDO) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AT THE LEIPZIG 1975 SPRING FAIR WAS A GREAT SUCCESS. THE DIRECT BENEFITS DERIVED BY THE AMERICAN FIRMS WHOSE CATALOGS WERE DISPLAYED MAY PROVE TO BE RELATIVELY SMALL, BUT THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT AN OFFICIAL AND PHYSICAL PRESENCE OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IN LEIPZIG SERVED AS AN EARNEST OF OUR INTEREST IN THE GDR MARKET. MOREOVER, THE CATALOG SHOW CUM INDUSTRY EXPERT BDO CONCEPT RECEIVED UNIFORMLY HIGH MARKS AS A TRADE PROMOTION VEHICLE FROM THE MANY GDR TRADE AND TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS WHO VISITED THE BOOTH. TO
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PAGE 02 BERLIN 05402 180753Z

JUDGE FROM THE ATTENTION EVINced BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC,

THE BDO WAS AN OBJECT OF SUBSTANTIAL CURIOSITY IF NOT OF TOPICAL INTEREST, LOCATED AS IT WAS IN A HALL LARGELY DEVOTED TO ATTRACTIVE DISPLAYS OF CROWD-PLEASING ITEMS SUCH AS EDIBLE PRODUCTS AND HANDICRAFTS.

2. OUR HIGHLY-PUBLICIZED START IN LEIPZIG WAS MADE POSSIBLE IN LARGE PART AS A RESULT OF THE PRESENCE OF AMBASSADOR COOPER IN LEIPZIG FOR THE FIRST FOUR DAYS OF THE FAIR. THE GDR PARTY AND GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP HAD NOT PLANNED TO STOP AT THE BDO, BUT THE PRESENCE OF THE AMBASSADOR AS THEY PASSED BY MADE A BRIEF VISIT ALL BUT INEVITABLE. HONECKER, STOPH AND SINDERMANN WORE BROAD SMILES THROUGHOUT THE BRIEF ENCOUNTER, BUT HONECKER WAS THE GROUP'S SPOKESMAN. HIS PUBLISHED REMARKS HAVE BEEN REPORTED ELSEWHERE (REFTEL). PRIOR TO LEAVING THE BDO, HONECKER RAISED HIS GLASS OF CALIFORNIA CHAMPAGNE, TOASTED THE WIFE OF AN EMBASSY OFFICER, AND SAID " YOUR COUNTRY HAS AN ABLE AND DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVE IN THE GDR; IN YOUR (THE U.S.) CASE POLITICS WILL PRECEDE TRADE." (AN INTERESTING SIDELIGHT: FOREIGN TRADE MINISTRY STATE SECRETARY BEIL TRANSLATED FROM THE ENGLISH FOR FIRST SECRETARY HONECKER'S BENEFIT AND DID SO IN A PROFESSIONAL MANNER, ESCHEWING A LITERAL TRANSLATION FOR ONE WHICH ACCURATELY RELECTED THE SENSE OF THE AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS.) THE PROMINENT AND EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE THIS MEETING RECEIVED CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE LARGE NUMBER OF GDR, US AND THIRD COUNTRY VISITORS WHO CAME TO THE BDO RIGHT THROUGH THE LAST MINUTES OF THE FAIR'S CLOSING DAY ON MARCH 16.

3. AT MINISTER FOR FOREIGN TRADE SOELLE'S RECEPTION ON MARCH 9, CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF MINSISTERS SINDERMANN RECEIVED AMBASSADOR COOPER FOR A FIVE-MINUTE CONVERSATION. LITTLE OF SUBSTANCE TRANSPIRED, BUT SINDERMANN'S OFFER TO MEET WITH THE AMBASSADOR WAS TYPICAL OF A CORDIAL AND FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE ON THE PART OF GDR OFFICIALS THROUGHOUT THE FAIR. SINDERMANN APOLOGIZED FOR NOT YET HAVING BEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 BERLIN 05402 180753Z

ABLE TO RECEIVE THE AMBASSADOR IN BERLIN BUT SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN AWAY FOR FOUR WEEKS ON CURE AND THAT HE WAS NOW VERY MUCH INVOLVED WITH VISITING DELEGATIONS TO THE LEIPZIG FAIR AND THE DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL OF SOVIET AMBASSADORS.

4. ON MARCH 10, AMBASSADOR COOPER OFFERED HOSPITALITY TO SELECTED PROMINENT OFFICIALS OF THE GDR FOREIGN

TRADE BUREAUACRACY. THESE INCLUDED HIGH-LEVEL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN TRADE AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, THE CHAMBER FOR FOREIGN TRADE, THE LEIPZIG FAIR AUTHORITY, THE FOREIGN TRADE BANK, AND VARIOUS FOREIGN TRADE ORGANIZATIONS AND REPRESENTATIVE FIRMS. BEIL USED THIS OCCASION, WHICH HAD BEEN INTENDED TO SERVE AS AN INFORMAL GET-ACQUAINTED SESSION WITH THE AMBASSADOR, TO PROPOUND A WORK PROGRAM FOR THE EMBASSY AND HIS MINISTRY FOR DEALING WITH BILATERAL TRADE QUESTIONS (CONVERSATION REPORTED SEPTEL).

5. ON MARCH 11, AMBASSADOR COOPER INVITED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRESS AND OF AMERICAN FIRMS IN LEIPZIG TO THE STAND. THESE SMALL SESSIONS PROVED POPULAR AND SERVED AS A USEFUL FORUM FOR AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND IDEAS.

6. ALSO ON MARCH 11, THE SOVIET MINISTER FOR MACHINE TOOL CONSTRUCTION AND THE MACHINE TOOL INDUSTRY, A. I. KOSTOUSOV, PAID A 40- MINUTE COURTESY CALL ON AMBASSADOR COOPER AT THE BDO, AFTER VISITING BRITISH AND FRENCH MACHINE TOOL EXHIBITS AT THE FAIR. THE SOVIET MINISTER LATER INVITED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE THREE WESTERN ALLIES TO THE SOVIET PAVILLION (ONLY THE BDO MACHINE TOOLS EXPERT WAS ABLE TO ACCEPT THIS INVITATION) FOR WHAT, IN THE EVENT, TURNED OUT TO BE A NON-GERMAN OCCASION, DEVOTED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO TOASTING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VICTORY OVER NAZI GERMANY.

7. THE ONLY UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT WHICH MARRED AN OTHERWISE SUCCESSFUL ENDEAVOR WAS OUR INABILITY TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 BERLIN 05402 180753Z

RECOGNIZE AND ACCORD DUE TREATMENT TO THE GDR MINISTER FOR MACHINE TOOLS, RUDI GEORGI, WHO VISITED THE BDO IN THE COMPANY OF HIS SOVIET COLLEAGUE. EMBASSY OFFICER TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE CHAMBER FOR FOREIGN TRADE RECEPTION ON MARCH 12 TO BRING THIS MATTER TO THE ATTENTION OF AN EAST GERMAN CONTACT, NOTING THAT IT WAS INCUMBENT UPON THE EAST GERMAN PROTOCOL AUTHORITIES TO HAVE NOTIFIED US THAT GEORGI WOULD BE PRESENT ON THAT OCCASION. WE PLAN TO BE IN TOUCH WITH GEORGI IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO REMEDY THIS OVERSIGHT. COOPER

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